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ABRAHAM LINCOLN: THE CENTRAL FIGURE IN AMERICAN HISTORY.—I.

By the Late David D. Thompson.

Abraham Lincoln was the central figure in American history. This fact is not so fully realized even to-day as it will be half a century or a century hence. There are yet Americans as unbelieving in such a declaration as was a neighbor of Lincoln's in Springfield, an Englishman, who, upon hearing of the nomination by the Chicago convention, exclaimed:

"What! Abe Lincoln nominated for President of the United States! Can it be possible? A man that buys a ten-cent beefsteak for breakfast, and carries it home himself!" But the student of Lincoln's written and spoken utterances and of his deeds will find his studies covering the entire past history of the country and his vision seeing far into the future.

Contemporary Opinion.

The greatness of Lincoln was not recognized during his lifetime. It required not only the assassin's bullet to remove the scales of prejudice from the eyes of friends and foes, but the clearer understanding of his relation to events and a knowledge of his earlier utterances to reveal his farsighted statesmanship and his mastery of the most difficult national problems which a ruler was ever called upon to solve.

When Mr. Lincoln was called to the presidency there were many men who believed that he was so incompetent as well as so inexperienced in political affairs that the nation would be lost unless they took the reins from his hands and saved it. One of these was William H. Seward, a statesman of great ability and the leader of the Republican Party. His friends expected him to be nominated for the presidency and both he and they were greatly disappointed when that prize was awarded to Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln, appreciating Seward's ability and the leading place which he held in the councils of the party, wisely selected him as his secretary of state, the most honorable and the most important position in the cabinet.

Seward and his friends, especially Thurlow Weed, the Republican "king maker" of New York State, supposed that Seward would and must dictate the policy of Lincoln. Their eyes were not opened even when on the night of Lincoln's inauguration, in reply to a question from the Washington correspondent of the New York *Herald* asking if there was any special news he might send Mr. Bennett, the editor, Mr. Lincoln replied: "Yes, you may tell him that Thurlow Weed has found out that Seward was not nominated at Chicago." Everybody knew that, and the correspondent did not at first appreciate the significance of the remark. After thinking it over he saw that that commonplace statement meant, on the authority of the President himself, that Weed's secret intrigues to become the power behind the cabinet had been defeated; that Salmon P. Chase, whom Seward and Weed opposed, was to be appointed secretary of the treasury and thus he also an influential member of the cabinet. The editor of the *Herald* appreciated the significance of Lincoln's remark and

crowded out of his paper the next morning much other matter relating to the inauguration in order that he might give prominence to it. So adroitly and so gently had Lincoln asserted his mastery of the situation that Seward did not realize that he had a master, though he did realize that he was defeated.

Misjudged by Seward.

Seward was much annoyed at Lincoln's seeming incapacity. Lincoln had no policy. The ship of state, to Seward, seemed to be drifting upon the rocks and a stronger hand than Lincoln's was needed at the helm. So he wrote a letter to Lincoln under date of April 1, 1861, to which he gave the title, "Some Thoughts for the President's Consideration." It was practically a suggestion to Lincoln to surrender the management of the affairs of the nation and place them in the hands of Seward. The chief complaint was that the administration, at the end of its first

month, was without a policy, domestic or foreign. That fact was fortunate for the nation, as time revealed. The situation and the frame of mind of the people were such that no policy could be adopted until some overt act of rebellion that would unite the North had taken place. This occurred shortly afterward, when Fort Sumter was fired on. Seward proposed to unite the North and South by leaving their differences unsettled and plunging the United States into a series of foreign wars. The scheme if it had been attempted would have established the Southern Confederacy, overwhelmed the North, and destroyed the nation. Lincoln replied the same day. He ignored the insult in his implied incapacity, and after some reference to matters of domestic and foreign policy declared in closing that as to Seward's suggestions as to the exercise of absolute authority, if that must be done, he, the President, must do it. No publicity was given these singular suggestions from Seward until after his death, when the document was published by

Lincoln's private secretaries, Nicolay and Hay.

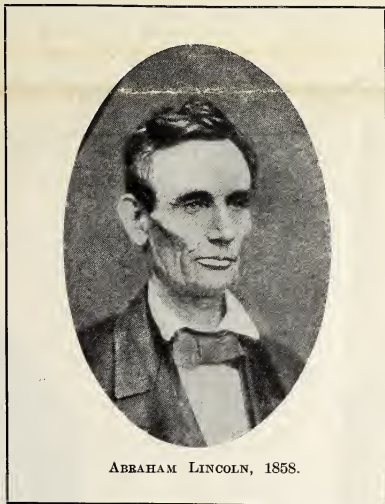
Lincoln's Policy.

One day Senator John M. Palmer of Illinois called on Lincoln. When admitted to Lincoln's room Palmer found him with a towel around his neck ready to shave. Buckingham of Connecticut had just left.

"Got to get shaved some time, Palmer," said Lincoln. "I couldn't shave while Buckingham was here; but you are home folks, and it doesn't matter with home folks."

They chatted till the barber reached his mouth, when he couldn't talk without running the risk of getting cut. There was a pause. During it Palmer thought of the great war that was going on, and of the man near him conducting it.

"Mr. Lincoln," said Palmer, "if I had known there was going to be so great a rebellion, I should never have thought of going to a one-horse town for a one-horse lawyer for President."



ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1858.

Lincoln stretched forth his arms, pushed the harrier aside, and abruptly wheeled around. Palmer thought he was angry because of what he had said. But he replied:

"Nor I either. It's lucky for this country no man was chosen



LINCOLN'S EARLY HOME.

who had a great policy, and would have stuck to it. If such a man had been chosen, this rebellion would never have reached a successful conclusion. I have had no great policy; but I have tried to do my duty every day, hoping that the morrow would find that I had done right."

Seward was one of the first to realize and recognize the mastery of Lincoln. Early in the administration he wrote to his wife: "Executive skill and vigor are rare qualities. The President is the best of us." Others, some of them close to Lincoln, continued for a long time to regard him as unequal to the task imposed upon him. Chase, in a letter to the President, criticised "the Micawher policy of waiting for something to turn up," and condemned some of the President's decisions as "cr—, no, blunders."

Criticised by Stanton.

Edwin M. Stanton, who afterward was Lincoln's right arm of power and loved him with an ardent affection, wrote to General John A. Dix from Washington in the summer of 1861: "No one can imagine the deplorable condition of this city, and the hazard of the government, who did not witness the weakness and panic of the administration and the painful imbecility of Lincoln." The week of the defeat at the battle of Bull Run Stanton wrote: "The imbecility of this administration culminated in that catastrophe; and irretrievable misfortune and national disgrace, never to be forgotten, are to be added to the ruin of all peaceful pursuits and national bankruptcy, as the result of Lincoln's 'running the machine' for five months. * * * It is not unlikely that some change in the War and Navy Departments may take place, but none beyond those two departments until Jeff Davis turns out the whole concern."

Mr. Lincoln never knew of these criticisms made by Stanton, but he knew of others made by him after he became secretary of war, and he knew how to make allowance for them.

On one occasion Lincoln wrote a note to the secretary of war, suggesting a transfer of some of the regiments. As the scheme seemed impracticable to Stanton, he refused to carry it out. "But we have the President's order," said Mr. Lovejoy, the bearer of the note. "Did Lincoln give you an order of that kind?" asked Stanton. "He did, sir," said Lovejoy. "Then he is a fool," was the response. Returning to the White House, Mr. Lovejoy reported the interview with Stanton. "Did Stanton say I was a fool?" asked Lincoln. "He did, sir, and repeated it," replied Lovejoy. "If Stanton said I was a fool," concluded Lincoln, thoughtfully, "then I must be one; for he is nearly always right, and generally says what he means. I will step over and see him."

Lincoln and the Generals.

Military leaders were as severe in their criticism of Lincoln and his administration as were civil leaders. General McClellan had an impression that he alone could save the nation. He criticised the administration and insulted the President, whom he treated with contempt. One evening Lincoln and Seward called on important business at McClellan's headquarters. They were told the general was out, but would soon return. After they had waited in the reception room almost an hour McClellan came back. Though an orderly told him who his visitors were, he went directly upstairs. Lincoln, thinking that perhaps he had not been announced, sent up his name. The messenger returned with the information that the general had gone to bed. Lincoln

swallowed the insult. After a somewhat similar experience Lincoln said to a general who was with him: "Never mind; I will hold McClellan's horse, if he will only bring us success." It was naturally difficult for McClellan to realize that Lincoln was no ordinary man. McClellan was president of the Illinois Central Railroad at the time of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, and being a Democrat, had placed his private car at the disposal of Douglas and showed him special favors, while Lincoln, in order to meet his appointments, was obliged often to ride on freight trains, notwithstanding he was an attorney for the railroad.

One of Lincoln's severest critics was General Hooker, who declared that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Despite his knowledge of Hooker's feelings, Lincoln appointed him to the command of the Army of the Potomac. The letter in which Lincoln notified Hooker of his appointment is a most remarkable illustration of Lincoln's greatness of character. Sixteen years later the letter was published. It reads as follows:

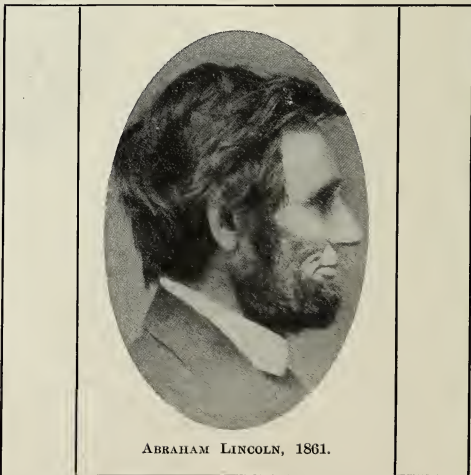
Executive Mansion, Washington, D. C.,
January 26, 1863.

MAJOR-GENERAL HOOKER:

General—I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course, I have done this upon what appears to me to be sufficient reasons; and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skillful soldier—which, of course, I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession—in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself—which is a valuable, if not an indispensable, quality. You are ambitious—which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that, during General Burnside's command of the army, you have taken counsel of your ambition, and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country, and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course, it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of its ability—which is neither more nor less than it has done, and will do, for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticising their commander and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you, as far as I can, to put it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it. And now, beware of rashness. Beware of rashness; but, with energy and sleepless vigilance, go forward and give us victories.

Yours, very truly,
A. LINCOLN.

Before the President sent this letter, an intimate friend chanced to be in his cabinet one night, and Mr. Lincoln read it



ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1861.

to him, remarking: "I shall not read this to anybody else; but I want to know how it strikes you." During the following April or May, while the Army of the Potomac lay opposite Fredericksburg, this friend accompanied Mr. Lincoln to the front, and

headquarters on a visit. One night General Hooker, alone with this gentleman, said:

"The President says that he showed you this letter;" and he then took out the document. The tears stood in Hooker's eyes as he added: "It is such a letter as a father might have written to his son; and yet it hurt me." Then he said: "When I have been to Richmond, I shall have this letter published."

The fact that there was apparently good ground for criticism was better known to none than to Lincoln. His heart was almost crushed by the weight of sorrow caused by the thousands of soldiers killed and wounded in unsuccessful or indecisive battles, and the sick and dying in hospitals. Yet he yearned for successful battles, because he constantly feared that without victory England and France would recognize the Southern Confederacy and thus give it the advantage of an international status. This would certainly have been the case in connection with the Trent affair but for the wisdom and moral courage of Lincoln.

Home Training.

How was Lincoln fitted to be the leader of the most gigantic struggle the world has ever known? A few statements will tell the secret and a few incidents will illustrate the effect. Abraham Lincoln was born February 12, 1809, in a floorless log hut that was little better than a hovel, that stood near the banks of a creek in what is now La Rue County, Kentucky. His father was Thomas Lincoln, his mother Nancy Hanks Lincoln. "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother—blessings on her memory." So spoke Abraham Lincoln of his mother, after he had become famous. She died when he was yet a child. From his father he inherited his name, his humble condition, and his love of story-telling; but from his mother the nobility of character which made him great, and won the admiration of the world.

On Sundays Nancy Lincoln would gather her children around her, and read to them the wonderful stories in the Bible, and pray with them. After he had become President, Lincoln, speaking of his mother, said: "I remember her prayers, and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life."

These Bible stories not only interested him, but they molded his character, and aroused a desire to be able to read for himself—a desire that, in later years, developed into an almost insatiable thirst for knowledge. All his lifetime he was a regular reader of the Bible—while President a daily reader. He imbibed the spirit of its teachings and gave them expression in his speeches and state papers. This was most notable in his second inaugural address, closing with those lofty sentences, "With malice toward none, with charity toward all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right."

First Contact with Slavery.

A man named Offutt engaged Lincoln to take a flatboat loaded with country produce, and sell it. While in New Orleans he, for the first time, entered a slave-market, where he saw men, women, and children sold like cattle. The anguish of fathers and mothers and children, as they were torn from each other, fired him with indignation, and he said to one of his companions: "If I ever get a chance to hit that institution, I will hit it hard, John."

While employed in Offutt's store in New Salem, Ill., Lincoln began to be called "Honest Abe." He was judge, arbitrator, referee, umpire, authority in all disputes, games, and matches of man-flesh and horse-flesh; a peacemaker in all quarrels; everybody's friend; the best-natured, the most sensible, the best-informed, the most modest and unassuming, the kindest, gentlest, roughest, strongest, best young fellow in all the region round about. He was also the best story-teller, and the most entertaining company.

In 1832 he enlisted as a volunteer soldier in the Black Hawk War, and was elected captain. He learned some lessons about military service that were of value when he became President.

As a Lawyer.

Lincoln's knowledge of law was based upon a thorough mastery of fundamental principles, rather than upon precedents. He was absolutely honest in his dealings with his clients and the court. He would expose the unlawful or unjust position of his opponent with wit and sarcasm, but he would not undertake to prosecute a suit or defend a case which he did not believe to be just. He would sometimes secure the favor of a jury by conceding nine unimportant points claimed by those opposing him, and win his case by contending for the one vital point. His pleas were always illuminated by humor and incident. No one was ever better able to take advantage of a ludicrous situation.

Two farmers, who had a misunderstanding about a horse-trade, went to law, employing Lincoln and his partner on the opposite sides. On the day of the trial, Logan, having bought a new shirt, open in the back, with a huge standing collar, dressed himself in extreme haste, and put on the shirt with the bosom at the back, a linen coat concealing the blunder. He dazed the jury with his knowledge of "horse points," and as the day was sultry, took off his coat and concluded his speech in his shirt sleeves.

Lincoln sitting behind him, took in the situation, and when his turn to speak came, remarked to the jury:

"Gentlemen, Mr. Logan has been trying, for more than an hour, to make you believe he knows more about a horse than these honest farmers who are witnesses. He has quoted largely from his 'horse-doctor.' And now, gentlemen, I submit to you [here he lifted Logan out of the chair, and turned him with his back to the jury and the crowd, at the same time turning up the enormous standing collar,] what dependence can you place in his horse knowledge, when he doesn't know enough to put on his shirt?"

The roars of laughter that greeted his exhibition, and the verdict that Lincoln got soon after, gave Logan a permanent prejudice against "bosom shirts."

Reverence for Law.

During the session of the Legislature on January 27, 1837, Lincoln delivered a remarkable address before the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield on the dangers which threatened the destruction of the nation.

He seems to have foreseen such a situation as exists to-day in connection with saloons which are defiantly nullifying law, when he declared that the approach of national danger, "if it ever reach us, must spring up amongst us; it cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen we must live through all time, or die by suicide." Speaking of the disregard for law as one of the points of danger to the existence of the nation, Mr. Lincoln said:

The question recurs, "How shall we fortify against it?"

The answer is simple. Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his posterity swear by the blood of the Revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of '76 did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to support of the Constitution and laws let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor—let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his fathers, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in primers, spelling-books, and in almanacs; let it be preached from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the political religion of the nation; and let the old and young, the rich and poor, the grave and the gay of all sexes and tongues and colors and conditions, feel deeply and unanimously upon its altars. While every state of feeling such as this shall universally or even very generally prevail throughout the nation, vain will be every effort, and fruitless every attempt, to subvert our national freedom.

Had Mr. Lincoln been as unfaithful to his oath as are the mayor of Chicago and some other officials in their subservience to the law-breaking saloon, the South would have been permitted to secede and we should have been a divided country.

Lincoln and Temperance.

Mr. Lincoln was elected a member of the Legislatures of 1838, 1840, 1842. While a member of the Legislature, February 22, 1842, Lincoln delivered an address on temperance before the Washington Temperance Society of Springfield, Ill., in which he said:

Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by a total and final banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks, seems to me not now an open question. Three fourths of mankind confess the affirmative with their tongues; and, I believe, all the rest acknowledge it in their hearts. Ought any, then, to refuse their aid in doing what the good of the whole demands? * * * To all the living, everywhere, we cry, "Come, sound the moral trumpet, that these may arise and stand up an exceeding great army! Come from the four winds, O breath! and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." If the relative grandeur of revolutions shall be estimated by the great amount of human misery they alleviate and the small amount they inflict, then, indeed, will this be the grandest the world shall ever have seen.

He closed his address with this remarkable prophecy:

When the victory shall be complete, when there shall be neither a slave nor a drunkard on the earth, how great will be the title that land which may claim to be the birthplace and cradle of those revolutions that shall have been ended in that victory!

Lincoln never used either liquor or tobacco in any form. He is said to have often preached the following "sermon," as he called it, to his boys:

"Don't drink, don't smoke, don't chew, don't swear, don't gamble, don't lie, don't cheat. Love your fellow men and love God. Love truth, love virtue, and be happy."

Lincoln's prophecy of the overthrow of slavery was fulfilled within a quarter of a century when he signed the Emancipation Proclamation. May we not hope that the person is now living—indeed, he may be reading this—who by some official act will fulfill the second part of Lincoln's prophecy, and destroy the

saloon, the cause of intemperance, which Lincoln declared to be the greatest curse of mankind.

Taking a Stand.

June 16, 1858, Lincoln was nominated for United States Senator by the Illinois Republican State Convention which met at Springfield. The eyes of the nation were turned in the direction of this little city. It was understood by all that Lincoln would be the orator of the occasion, and that his speech before the convention would be a great political event. He realized this fact, and prepared his speech so that there could be no misunderstanding of his views upon the great issue then before the country—slavery. The speech was as follows:

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION—If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far on into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has continually augmented. In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new, North as well as South.

The speech startled the nation. No such daring words, no such unequivocal statement of the great problem had yet been uttered by any man of political prominence and power.

Lincoln-Douglas Debates.

The campaign which followed and the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates attracted national attention, and brought Lincoln to public notice. Lincoln and Douglas represented the conservative positions on the slavery question, though at the time each was thought to be extremely radical—Lincoln being opposed to the extension of slavery under any conditions, and Douglas being in favor of leaving the people of a territory to decide it for themselves. The immediate issue involved related to the extension of slavery into Kansas.

Douglas was the champion of what he termed "squatter sovereignty;" that is, that the settlers of a territory at the time of its proposed admission to the Union of States should, in the provisional constitution, determine whether slavery should be permitted in the new state or not.

The position of Douglas had arrayed against him many anti-slavery Democrats in the North, and proslavery Democrats in the South, besides President Buchanan, whom Douglas had antagonized.

Previous to his debates with Douglas, Lincoln's speeches had been characterized by a rich fund of humor and anecdote. But it came to be noticed that as the debates continued, Lincoln's stories diminished in number, while his earnestness in presenting the great moral issue of the campaign and his appeals for justice increased. It was observed, too, that while the people laughed at Douglas' stories, they went away after Lincoln's speech with thoughtful faces, and talked seriously among themselves of the points made by him. The more important of the debates related to a series of questions presented by each speaker to the other. Douglas's answers to Lincoln's questions displeased the South, led to the division of the Democratic Party in 1860, his defeat for the presidency, and the election of Lincoln.

Expanding Fame.

Mr. Lincoln's debate with Douglas attracted national attention. People in the East had heard of him as a Western politician famous for his jokes. But a man who could vanquish Stephen A. Douglas, one of the ablest and most polished speakers in the land, must, they thought, be something more than "a teller of jokes." There was great curiosity to hear him, and he was invited to lecture in Cooper Institute. He consented to do so, on condition that he might speak on a political subject. There was a vast audience, including many of the most distinguished men of the time. Perhaps hundreds were drawn simply by curiosity to see the man they had read so much about. That he was a scholar or a statesman they did not suppose.

Mr. Lincoln had carefully prepared his speech. His object was to show that the fathers of the Republic knew as much about the slavery question as did the people of 1860, and that they desired to prevent its extension. It contained incidents, but they were designed to clinch his argument, not to amuse his hearers. The audience was charmed with his eloquence, and impressed with his ability and statesmanship. His closing sentence was a bugle-blast: "LET US HAVE FAITH THAT RIGHT IS

MIGHT, AND LET US IN THAT FAITH, TO THE END, DARE TO DO OUR DUTY AS WE UNDERSTAND IT."

This lecture directed the attention of the people of the East to Lincoln as an available candidate for President, and contributed very much to his nomination at Chicago a few months later.

Lincoln's Nomination.

Lincoln's nomination for the presidency was in some measure at least as unexpected to him as it was to the country at large. He believed Seward to be the most available man. While willing that his friends should seek to secure his nomination, he distinctly told them that he would authorize no bargains for the presidency and would be bound by none. His friends, however, employed shrewd tactics to bring their candidate to the notice of delegates, and to indicate his popularity.

On the first day of the convention they discovered that there was an organized body of New Yorkers and others in the "Wigwam" who cheered vociferously whenever Seward's name was mentioned, or any allusion was made to him. The New Yorkers did the shouting, Lincoln's friends were modest and quiet. They decided that if there was any power in noise the West should be heard. There was then living in Chicago a man whose voice could drown the roar of Lake Michigan in its wildest fury; in fact, it was said that his shout could be heard, on a calm day, across that lake. Cook of Ottawa knew another man, living on the Illinois River, a Dr. Ames, who had never found his equal in his ability to shout and huzah. He was, however, a Democrat.

Cook telegraphed for him to come to Chicago by the first train. These two men with stentorian voices met some of the Illinois delegation at the Tremont House, and were instructed to organize each a body of men to cheer and shout, which they speedily did out of the crowds which were in attendance from the Northwest. They were placed on opposite sides of the "Wigwam," and instructed that when Cook took out his white handkerchief they were to cheer, and not to cease until he returned it to his pocket. Cook was conspicuous on the platform, and, at the first utterance of the name of Lincoln, simultaneously with the wave of Cook's handkerchief, there went up such a cheer, such a shout as never before had been heard, and which startled the friends of Seward as the cry of "Marmion" on Flodden Field "startled the Scottish foe." The New Yorkers tried to follow when the name of Seward was spoken, but, beaten at their own game, their voices were instantly and absolutely drowned by cheers for Lincoln. This was kept up until Lincoln was nominated, amid a storm of applause never before equaled.

Ames was so carried away with his enthusiasm for Lincoln that he joined the Republican Party, and continued to shout for Lincoln during the whole campaign; he was afterward rewarded with a country post office.

While the convention was in session Lincoln was at his home in Springfield. The proceedings and the result of each ballot were immediately communicated to him by a telegraph wire extending from the "Wigwam." At the time of the second ballot Lincoln was with some friends in the office of the Sangamon Journal. Soon a gentleman hastily entered from the telegraph office bearing a slip of paper on which his nomination—the result of the third ballot—was written. He read the paper to himself, and then aloud, and then, without stopping to receive congratulations of his friends, he said: "There is a little woman down at our house who would like to hear this. I'll go down and tell her."

Notifying the Nominee.

Immediately after the convention adjourned, a committee visited Mr. Lincoln in Springfield, Ill., to inform him officially of his nomination. Some friends, knowing Lincoln's total abstinence habits and believing that he would in all probability have no liquors in the house, called upon him, and suggested that perhaps some members of the committee would be in need of some refreshments, wine or other liquors. "I haven't any in the house," said Lincoln. "We will furnish them," said the visitors. "Gentlemen," replied Lincoln, "I cannot allow you to do what I will not do myself." After the formal ceremonies connected with the business of the committee of notification had passed, Lincoln remarked that, as an appropriate conclusion to an interview so important and interesting, he supposed good manners would require that he should furnish the committee something to drink; and opening a door, he called out, "Mary! Mary!" A girl responded to the call, to whom Mr. Lincoln spoke a few words in an undertone. In a few minutes the maiden entered bearing a large waiter, containing several glass tumblers and a large pitcher, and placed it upon the center-table.

Mr. Lincoln arose, and gravely addressing the company, said: "Gentlemen, we must pledge our mutual healths in the most healthy beverage which God has given to man. It is the only beverage I have ever used or allowed in my family, and I cannot conscientiously depart from it on the present occasion; it is pure Adam's ale from the spring;" and, taking a tumbler, he touched

with the information that the general had gone to bed. Lincoln here, this friend suggested, the

it to his lips, and pledged them his highest respects in a cup of cold water.

Such an attitude toward liquor on the part of candidates for high office was rarer and less popular in that day than it is in this. Mr. Lincoln set an example which it is wise for all office-seekers to follow.

While Mr. Lincoln would not accept a gift of wine, he did accept soon after his nomination the gift of an elegant new hat. When it arrived he took the hat, and, after admiring its texture and workmanship, put it on his head and walked up to a looking-glass. Glancing from the reflection to Mrs. Lincoln, he said, with his peculiar twinkle of the eye:

"Well, wife, there is one thing likely to come out of this scrape, anyhow. We are going to have some *new clothes*!"

Foreseeing the Evil.

Mr. Lincoln realized that he was entering upon no ordinary political campaign. The issues were moral issues, and upon the result hung the fate of the nation. In a conversation during the campaign with Mr. Newton Bateman, state superintendent of public instruction, concerning the attitude of several ministers, Mr. Lincoln said, with a trembling voice and cheeks wet with tears: "I know there is a God, and that he hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that his hand is in it. If he has a place and work for me—and I think he has—I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but truth is everything. I know I

am right, because I know that liberty is right; for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God. I have told them that a house divided against itself cannot stand; and Christ and reason say the same; and they will find it so. Douglas don't care whether slavery is voted up or down; but God cares, and humanity cares, and I care, and, with God's help, I shall not fail. I may not see the end, but it will come, and I shall be vindicated; and these men will find that they have not read their Bible right."

"Much of this," says Mr. Bateman, "was uttered as if he was speaking to himself, and with a sad, earnest solemnity of manner impossible to be described. After a pause, he resumed: 'Doesn't it appear strange that men can ignore the moral aspect of this contest? A revelation could not make it plainer to me that slavery or the government must be destroyed. The future would be something awful, as I look at it, but for this rock on which I stand—alluding to the Testament which he still held in his hand—especially with the knowledge of how these ministers are going to vote. It seems as if God had borne with this thing [slavery] until the very teachers of religion had come to defend it from the Bible, and to claim for it a divine character and sanction; and now the cup of iniquity is full, and the vials of wrath will be poured out.'"

Owing to the split in the Democratic Party Mr. Lincoln was elected President, but by a minority vote. His vote, in fact, was nearly a million votes short of a majority. The hand of God would seem to have directed events.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

J. P. Trowbridge, West Groton, Mass.

During the last quarter of the eighteenth century that region of remarkable fertility which lies south of the Ohio River was organized into the District of Kentucky and then into the state now bearing that name. Courts of justice were instituted in a few widely separated settlements; defenses against the Indians were strengthened and multiplied; log houses were built by the pioneers in little clusters where at present populous cities are located; and in some instances schools of an elementary character were taught by men who at the close of the Revolution had found their way into the wilderness.

About the year 1780 Abraham Lincoln, the grandfather of the martyr President, set out with his wife and five children from Rockingham County, Virginia, to seek a home in this new country. It is quite certain he made the venture on account of his friendship with that most famous of all American frontiersmen, Daniel Boone. Their families for a century previous had been closely allied and they themselves were kindred spirits in every kind of wild adventure. Lincoln settled in Jefferson County, and was well established in his forest clearing, when, on going to his toil one morning in 1786, an Indian's bullet laid him low in death. His youngest son, Thomas, the father of the future President—then a boy of only seven years of age—was standing near and saw the murderous act committed. Although he was filled with horror at the sight, it did not render him an implacable foe to the red men as it did his elder brother. For some time to come the fatherless family remained in the same locality, and then removed to a more thickly settled neighborhood in Washington County about forty miles distant. Here Thomas Lincoln grew up to manhood, chose his vocation as a carpenter, married his wife—Nancy Hanks by name—and in an easy-going way, without ambition, but not without self-respect, he turned his face toward the future, never dreaming what was in store for him or for the wonderful child whom God should give him.

Abraham Lincoln, the namesake of the pioneer, was born in Hardin County, Kentucky, on Sunday, February 12, 1809, the second child and only son of Thomas and Nancy (Hanks) Lincoln. What the boy's condition and feelings may have been during his childhood the world will never know from anything that he himself revealed regarding them. One of his biographers writes: "He lived a solitary life in the woods, returning from his lonesome little games to his cheerless home. He never talked of these days to his most intimate friends. Once, when asked what he remembered about the war with Great Britain, he replied, 'Nothing but this. I had been fishing one day and caught a little fish which I was taking home. I met a soldier in the road, and having been always told at home that we should be good to the soldiers, I gave him my fish.' This is only a faint glimpse, but what it shows is rather pleasant—the generous child and the patriotic family."

The life of solitude and privation had a profound influence on his subsequent career. The somber aspect which it bore made him serious and sometimes melancholy, while its absolute and constant nearness to nature's heart, in a pleasant country and under a genial sky, imparted to him a note of cheer, and gave him that richness of humor which never forsook him under the destined

burden of heaviest care. He enjoyed, moreover, the protection and love of one of the best of mothers, who, although she was poor and faint with toil, was noble in spirit, and deserves a place beside the matrons of classic Greece or the yet worthier heroines of modern history. Doubtless she was the unconscious originator of her son's youthful tastes, ambitions, and aspiring hopes. Mr. Lincoln owed to his mother, during the nine years she lived after his birth, an untold debt of gratitude; and he was never insensible to that obligation. When she died in the autumn of 1818, and was buried in a little clearing in the forests of southern Indiana where the family had then fixed their abode, he was heartbroken. Because no funeral service had been performed in connection with the event he rested not until finally he secured an itinerant preacher, who had known his mother in Kentucky, and induced him to deliver a sermon over her grave then covered with the winter's snow.

The following year was even more dreary and desolate than any of the preceding ones had been. The one-room cabin (we cannot call it a home), in which Abraham and his older sister, and their improvident father dwelt, had neither door nor windows, and the hard earth was its only floor. But perhaps it is always darkest just before the dawn; at least it was so in this instance. A step-mother—Thomas Lincoln's second wife, Sarah Bush by name—was brought into the dwelling. She was an energetic, honest Christian woman, and her household goods, brought from Kentucky on a four-horse wagon, furnished the place with an unwonted degree of comfort. The education of her stepson was in her opinion of the first importance, and she made no delay in securing the best facilities within reach. Speaking of the schools of that region, Mr. Lincoln once said: "It was a wild country with many bears and other wild beasts in the woods. There were some schools so called, but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond reading, writing, and ciphering to the rule of three." A few books, however, were at hand—the Bible, Esop's Fables, the "Pilgrim's Progress," a short "History of the United States," and Weems's "Life of Washington." These, and others, as time went on, were eagerly devoured by this hapless lad who had learned to love his stepmother as he had loved his own. She loved him in return and thereby controlled him. He was not a precocious scholar, but his thirst for knowledge was intense, steadfast, and enduring. He carried through all his years an open and inquiring mind, slow in choosing, but remarkably sensible and correct in every judgment.

By the time Lincoln had reached his majority he attained his full growth of six feet and four inches. Owing to misrepresentations, and inferences drawn from his humble Western origin, he was regarded by many, while he was living, as a homely, awkward, ill-mannered man. In one of the trifling bits of autobiography which he wrote in the campaign of 1860 at the request of a friend, he thus describes himself: "If any personal description of me is thought desirable, I am in height six feet four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing, on an average, one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair and gray eyes." The question of looks depended, however, in Lincoln's

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